

Unpleasant Duty That May Save Others, Hangman Says



Anthony Chebatoris, known as "the boy who was hanged" was that he jammed his gun and couldn't get more in the Midland bank for which he was hanged today, is shown at left above in Milan, Mich. prison. He had been a law-breaker since childhood and spent half his life in prisons. Sheriff Ira Smith of Midland, right, was the hangman at the execution.

Sheriff Pulls Lever Over Protest Of His Young Son

Milan, Mich., July 8—UP—Sheriff Ira M. Smith of Midland county, the officer who pulled the lever that sent Tony Chebatoris to his death today, is a kindly, 45-year-old family man who idolizes his 7-year-old boy, Donald. To him, pulling a lever on the death trap was just an unpleasant task in the line of duty.

Until today, Sheriff Smith never had seen a man die from any cause. He has seen persons after dying of murder, suicide, and various accidents, but for the first time he saw death in reality.

"I was brought up to do my duty, regardless of what it might be," Sheriff Smith said. "I believe Tony Chebatoris should have died, but to me he was not a personality—he was just a criminal who deserved death and I, representing the law, had a part in seeing that he properly received the sentence given him."

Admits He Disliked Task.
The sheriff had been asked if he relished the task. He recounted a conversation in which his son said to his mother:

"I wish Daddy wouldn't do that." Smith said he was motivated in accepting the hangman's task by the eleventh hour attempt of Government lawyers to stop the execution and possibly bring about a commutation of sentence.

"I offered to take this job to prevent such stoppage of the execution," he said. "By taking the life of this man, we may be saving many other lives. If a man like Chebatoris is permitted to go free, or to serve a life sentence, it is only a hint to other men to take up crime."

Smith said he received \$25 expense for his journey to Milan from Midland county.

"I'd Have Killed More."

Smith, recalling the moments after he had arrested Chebatoris, said that when the first question Chebatoris asked was:

"Did that man die yet?" referring to Harry S. Porter, the innocent bystander whom he had killed.

"It's too bad my gun quit. If I had had more shells I'd have killed more of them," Smith quoted Chebatoris as saying.

WPA To Help Pay

NEW BUILDING PLANS SPEEDED

Officials Of City, County Consult With Architect

City and county officials and a Detroit architectural firm today speeded plans for the proposed city-county building.

The city council for filing an application for a PWA grant of 45 per cent of the cost of the structure. Public approval of a bond issue to finance the remainder of the cost would also be required. PWA applications must be filed before Sept. 30 and construction of PWA projects must start by Jan. 1, 1939.

A. D. Walker, of Smith, Hinchen & Grylls, Inc., Detroit architects hired by the board of supervisors a week ago to draft preliminary plans for the new structure, told the city commission today that the PWA will consider a joint city and county application.

Mr. Walker told the PWA that a joint committee, representing both the city and county, be appointed to negotiate with the PWA.

The city commission agreed that City Attorney Samuel D. Pepper and Prosecuting Attorney Arthur C. Miller draft a resolution to fix powers and members of the committee. The commission adjourned to 10 a. m. Saturday, when the resolution will be presented for approval by the city commission.

Mr. Walker told the commission that, because of the PWA deadlines for filing applications and the fact that the city's application should be submitted early in August and that a special meeting of the board of supervisors to call a special election in the county will be necessary. The city commission will have to call a special election in the city to vote on the proposed bond issue.

The building committee of the city commission plans to receive preliminary sketches of the new building by July 19. Mr. Walker said. A meeting of the board of supervisors to call a special election for the consideration of the bond issue would follow a special election in the city to approve the city's share of the